

Preparing for Pets and Livestock in Emergencies

Virginia Public Safety Outreach
Conference

Williamsburg, VA

November 15-17, 2006



HURRICANE KATRINA

August 26, 2005

- The most devastating natural disaster in our nation's history.
- Exemplified more than any previous disaster the significance of the human-animal bond.
- Gave impetus to the P.E.T.S Act requiring local and state preparedness authorities to include in their evacuation plans how pets and service animals will be accommodated in the event of a disaster.







THE P.E.T.S ACT

- H.R. 3858, Introduced October 23, 2005, had 110 co-sponsors and passed the House May 22, 2006 by 349-24 vote
- S. 2548, Introduced April 5, 2006 and passed unanimously August 4, 2006 with amendment which was approved by House vote on September 20, 2006
- Signed into law by President Bush on October 6, 2006

PROVISIONS OF P.E.T.S. ACT

- Requires that local and state emergency preparedness authorities include plans for pets and service animals in their disaster plans to qualify for grants from FEMA;
- Grants FEMA the authority to assist states and local communities in developing disaster plans to accommodate people with pets and service animals;

P.E.T.S. ACT cont'd.

- Authorizes federal funds to help create pet-friendly emergency shelter facilities;
- Allows FEMA to provide assistance to individuals with pets and service animals, and the animals themselves, following a major disaster.

WHY PLAN FOR ANIMALS?

- The purpose in planning for animals is to minimize animal suffering, loss of life, and subsequent disability by providing timely and coordinated assistance for animals displaced during a disaster, thereby preventing or alleviating anxiety and distress of animals and their owners.

OBJECTIVES OF PLANNING

- To coordinate efforts with emergency personnel to minimize animal suffering, loss of life, and subsequent disability.
- To protect the health and safety of the community.
- To provide immediate care and control of animals.
- To provide a system of returning animals to their owners after the event is over.

DEVELOPING A PLAN

- Determine what plan, if any, is in place in your locality for responding to the needs of animals in a disaster.
- Meet with your local emergency manager to discuss issues related to animals in disasters, including livestock, poultry and wildlife, in addition to companion animals.

DEVELOPING A PLAN, cont'd

- Meet with a representative of your local Red Cross or Social Services representative to discuss the protocols related to people with pets.
- Identify sources of volunteers:
 - animal welfare organizations
 - animal control agencies
 - animal rescue groups
 - dog and cat clubs
 - horse clubs
 - 4-H, FFA, Civic clubs
 - Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops

DEVELOPING A PLAN, cont'd

- Identify location for emergency sheltering of animals
 - Existing animal facility
 - Animal facility in adjacent area
 - Fairgrounds
 - Stockyards
 - Barn, stables, race track
 - Boarding kennels
 - Vacant warehouse
 - Pasture

DEVELOPING A PLAN, cont'd

- Stockpile useful surplus equipment in a central location

Identify person responsible

Maintain master list

Inventory annually

Develop memorandum of understanding for replacement of supplies or equipment used, damaged or lost.

DEVELOPING A PLAN, cont'd

- Participate in training opportunities:
 - Seminars and conferences
 - FEMA Online courses – ICS100, ICS200 and NIMS 700
 - FEMA Animal Disaster Modules A and B
 - Red Cross First Aid
 - Red Cross Pet First Aid
 - CERT Training

PLANNING FOR ANIMALS

- Owners of companion animals should be encouraged to plan in advance for taking their pets with them if the need to evacuate arises. Pets left at home alone are at greater risk for injury or loss of life.
- Pet owners should have a carrier or crate for each pet that they own. The carrier or crate should be large enough for the animal to stand up and turn around.
- Each pet should wear a properly fitted collar or harness with current license and rabies tags and an identification tag.
- Current vaccination records and a current photo of each pet should accompany each pet that is evacuated.

PLANNING FOR ANIMALS, cont'd

- Pet owners should check in advance to determine available boarding facilities such as kennels and veterinary clinics, or any other facilities where animals are housed routinely.
- Friends or relatives out of the immediate area may be willing to take owners' pets temporarily.
- Hotels and motels may accept pets, especially during an emergency. www.petswelcome.com is a good reference.

PLANNING FOR ANIMALS, cont'd

- Pet owners should assemble in an evacuation kit the following supplies:
 - A minimum 3 days supply of dry pet food in a waterproof container for each pet
 - Food and water bowls
 - Litter and litter pans for cats
 - Ample supply of medications
 - First aid supplies
 - Favorite blanket or toy
 - Newspapers, towels, bags for disposal of pet wastes, cleaners and disinfectants.
 - Current photo of pet, preferably including owner

PLANNING FOR ANIMALS, cont'd

- Pocket pets such as hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils and other small animals should be in a carrier or cage with proper identification and provided with appropriate bedding, food and water for the specific type of animal.
- Exotic pets such as iguanas and lizards should be kept in a watertight container and provided with a hot water bottle or other non-electrical heating element to keep the pet warm.
- Bird cages should include covers to keep the birds calm. Food should be in dispensers that regulate amount of food and extra water should be provided.
- Large animals such as horses and livestock require special considerations in planning for evacuation.



CONSIDERATIONS FOR HORSES

- Have halter and lead shank ready for each horse in case the need for evacuation arises.
- Provide identification for each horse including horse's name, your name and telephone number and alternate emergency number.
- Place medical records, including Coggins test, vaccinations, veterinarian contact information and alternate emergency numbers in a waterproof envelope in a safe place that can be easily accessed.

HORSE CONSIDERATIONS, cont'd.

- Prepare a basic first aid kit that is portable and easily accessible.
- Have on hand a three-day supply of water, hay, feed, and medications for each horse.
- Know where you can take your horses if the need to evacuate arises. Arrangements to trailer horses should be made in advance.
- Inform friends and neighbors of evacuation plans. Provide written information in prominent location for emergency responders if unavailable to evacuate horses.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR LIVESTOCK

- Most species of livestock are herd-bound; some are more amenable to relocation than others.
- Consideration needs to be given to safest location for sheltering in place if relocation is not possible or feasible.
- Fairgrounds and livestock yards may be a resource for relocation in some situations.

LIVESTOCK, cont'd.

- MOU's with neighboring farms for relocation of livestock should be considered.
- Health records and other important papers should be kept in a safe place where they may be readily accessed.
- Livestock should be provided with some type of identification in the form of ear tags, microchips or tattoos.
- An adequate supply of water, hay and feed should be available at all times.



BARN FIRES

The Most Common Disaster for Horses and Livestock

- Prevention Is Key:
 - Prohibit smoking in or around the barn.
 - Store vehicles, machinery and flammable materials away from the barn.
 - Use fans, heaters, and radios only when someone is in the barn.
 - Be sure hay is dry before storing it.
 - Inspect electrical systems regularly for frayed wiring.
 - Familiarize animals with emergency procedures.

IN THE EVENT OF A BARN FIRE

- Immediately call 911 or your local emergency service. This number should be posted in a prominent location.
- Do not enter any barn if it is already engulfed in flames.
- If it is safe to enter the barn halter and remove animals beginning with the most accessible ones.
- Move animals quickly to an enclosed area where they are not able to return to a burning barn.

PLANNING FOR ANIMALS, cont'd

- Do not be complacent – no one is immune from the possibility of an evacuation incident. Be prepared!
- As soon as the possibility of an evacuation is indicated begin to confine pets in an enclosed area. They are even more sensitive to weather conditions and related stressors than humans and may be difficult to locate and catch.
- Know where you will shelter your animals. Have alternate evacuation routes in mind.

USE OF THE BUDDY SYSTEM

- Establish a buddy system with someone in the neighborhood so that they will check on your animals during a disaster in case you are not at home.
- Exchange veterinary contact information and have a permission slip included in your animal's file.
- Develop an evacuation plan with the buddy to be used if necessary in your absence.

TYPES OF ANIMAL SHELTERING

- Pet friendly sheltering, where owners and pets are sheltered within the same facility. The owner has full responsibility for the care of the pet.
- Co-location sheltering, where the pets are sheltered in an adjacent facility. The owner provides much of the care of the pet. Some oversight supervision is necessary.
- Temporary emergency sheltering, where the pets are cared for by animal welfare professionals or volunteers. This may not necessarily be located near the shelter for people.

SHELTERING IN PLACE

- Utilize an area for your pet such as a bathroom or utility room, well away from windows.
- Do not confine cats and dogs in the same area, even if they normally get along well together.
- Make certain that pets are wearing a properly fitted collar with current license and rabies tags and an identification tag. Have on hand a leash or carrier to control or relocate pet.
- Small animals and birds should be kept securely caged.
- Always keep on hand a minimum three-day supply of food and water, and medications when indicated.
- Store additional pet-related supplies where they easily can be found.

Following an Emergency

- Following a disaster pets should not be allowed outdoors for several days. Sights and sounds familiar to the animal may be gone. Downed power lines and animals roaming at large may pose a threat to the pet's safety.
- Pets should not be allowed to drink from an open water supply until informed by authorities that the water is safe. Bottled water should be provided.
- Exotics and livestock may have been displaced by the disaster, as well as wildlife. Be watchful for unusual animal behavior due to shock, fear, injury or disorientation.

HURRICANE FLOYD

September, 1999

- Greatly impacted the economy of North Carolina.
- 100,000 hogs and 750,000 turkeys were destroyed.
- Outbreaks of zoonotic disease was a threat to public health.
- Tobacco harvest was lost.
- Total impact on economy amounted to \$813 million dollars.
- State was totally unprepared to deal with a disaster of this magnitude.

ANY DISASTER, ANY ANIMAL,
ANYWHERE



WHAT IS SART?

- SART is a public/private partnership joining government agencies with private and non-profit sectors around the common goal of animal issues during disasters.
- SART programs train participants to provide a safe, environmentally sound and efficient response to animal emergencies on the county, state and federal level.

WHAT IS SART, cont'd.

- SART is based on the principles of the Incident Command system (ICS) and operates under ICS when responding to animal emergencies.
- The SART model follows the principles and structure of the National Incident Management System nationally mandated by the Department of Homeland Security.

SART'S MISSION AND GOALS

- SART's mission is providing prevention, response and recovery for animal emergencies.
- SART's goals include decreasing the spread of disease, decreasing the threat to human health and safety, and minimizing the economic impact of animal emergencies.

County Teams Are Critical!

- Local teams will be First Responders in any activation.
- Requests for resources and assistance always start at the local level.
- Disasters happen from the bottom up.
- Local response is the best response!



CARTs - County Animal Response Teams

- Emergency Management
- Animal Control
- Public Health
- Red Cross
- Fire Department
- Sheriff
- EMS
- Department of Agriculture
- Cooperative Extension
- Veterinarians
- Humane groups
- Farmers
- Lab animal facilities
- Pet groomers, trainers
- Pet suppliers
- Concerned citizens



SART IN VIRGINIA

- Early this year the Disaster Animal Care and Control Committee (DACCC) learned of the opportunity to apply for a PetSmart Charities Matching Funds grant to bring the SART model to Virginia.
- The DACCC Committee committed matching funds in the amount of \$20,000 to apply for this grant. The Committee was notified in May that it had been awarded one of the PetSmart Charities Matching Fund grants.

Provisions of PetSmart Charities Matching Grant Fund

- A State Steering Committee will interact with National SART Trainers in a three-month individualized “Needs Assessment” and curriculum design period.
- A two-day Stakeholder Summit seminar will be planned to include all key stakeholders.
- SART Trainers will provide implementation consultation for a six-month period following the Summit.

SART IN VIRGINIA

- The SART model will be developed in Virginia based on the State's regional demographics and its vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters.
- The Virginia State Animal Response Team has been approved as a 501(c)3 corporation providing opportunities to receive donations and to apply for grants as a tax-exempt organization.

IN SUMMARY

- Preparing for pets and livestock in emergencies is not just about animals, it is about people and their concern for animals.
- VA SART/CARTs will assist county and state agencies in mitigation, preparation, response and recovery for animals.
- CARTs will provide opportunities to bring together people who deal with animals but not routinely with each other.

RESOURCES

- American Humane Association
- American Red Cross
- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- American Veterinary Medical Association
- Emergency Animal Rescue Service of United Animal Nations
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Humane Society of the United States
- Virginia Animal Control Association
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management
- Virginia Federation of Humane Societies

RESOURCES, cont'd

- Virginia Veterinary Medical Association
- Virginia Association of Licensed Veterinary Technicians
- Virginia Association of Wildlife Rehabilitators
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Dog clubs
- Cat Fancier Associations
- Breed rescue groups
- Bird clubs
- Horse clubs
- 4-H clubs
- Scout groups
- Young farmers' associations

HELPFUL WEB SITES

- www.aspca.org
- www.code3associates.org
- www.fema.gov
- www.hsus.org
- www.sartusa.org
- www.VAEmergency.com
- www.vdacs.gov
- www.vdem.virginia.gov
- www.vfhs.org
- www.virginiahorsecouncil.org
- www.uan.org

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